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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND
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Thirty-second session
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Agenda item 9

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE FIRST PART OF ITS THIRTY-SECOND SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Sally E. MOSS (Bahamas)

IV. COORDINATION QUESTIONS

A. Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and preparations for the Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Administrative Committee on Coordination

C. Preparation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 1996-2001

1. At its 2nd to 5th meetings, on 11 and 12 May, the Committee considered the annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1991 (E/1992/11 and Add.1 and 2), the report of the Chairmen of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the twenty-sixth series of Joint Meetings of the two Committees (E/1991/143) and the report of the Secretary-General on the preparation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 1991-2001 (E/1992/6).

Discussion

2. The Committee had an extensive and wide-ranging discussion of the report of ACC, during which many issues relating to both the content and the format of the report, as well as to the substantive issues addressed in it, were considered.

3. A number of delegations were of the view that the transition in the States of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States was a challenge to the organizations of the United Nations system and might call for additional resources to fully respond to it. Other delegations stated that it might place a further potential strain on United Nations resources.

4. A number of delegations expressed reservations about the principle of zero real budget growth referred to in the report, noting that zero real growth had never been established as a principle. Other delegations supported the approach of zero real growth, and recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 45/255 concerning the recommendations of the Committee, had requested that a proposal by the Secretary-General predicated that zero real growth in recurrent expenditure should constitute the basis for the preparations of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

5. The Committee took note of the statement made by the Secretariat, according to which a temporary suspension of external recruitment was imposed with a view to enabling an orderly implementation of the restructuring process and that similar decisions had been taken by the governing bodies of other organs.

6. A number of delegations supported the convening of a conference on financing for development as proposed by the Secretary-General. Some delegations noted that the convening of such a conference would be considered by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

7. A number of delegations questioned the apparent lack of commitment on the part of Governments to combat desertification, which was noted in the report.

8. A number of delegations expressed concern about and asked for more precise information relating to the carrying out of the functions that were previously exercised by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation and about new focal points for United Nations responsibilities related to African economic recovery and development and the follow-up of the Chernobyl accident. The Secretariat explained that the responsibilities entrusted to the Office of the Director-General had been transferred to the Department of Economic and Social Development, including the focal point responsibility related to African economic recovery and development. Arrangements for the setting-up of a focal point for the follow-up of the Chernobyl accident were being discussed within the Secretariat.

9. A number of delegations expressed concern about the financial situation of the Development Forum and requested that it be funded from the regular budget. Other delegations questioned its continued usefulness. At the same time, it was noted that satisfaction had been expressed in that respect by the targeted audience through their answers to the readers' survey.

10. Some delegations were concerned about the possible interruption of the unique activities of the Non-Governmental Liaison Service, owing to a lack of solid funding, at a time when organizations of the United Nations system had already indicated their support for the principle of establishing that Service as a jointly financed activity.

11. A number of delegations expressed satisfaction with the contribution of the Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC with regard to substantive proposals for in-depth discussion during sessions of the Economic and Social Council.

Conclusions and recommendations

The annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination

12. The Committee regretted the late issuance of some documentation and stressed that improved planning for the timely issuance of documents by the Secretariat was needed.

13. At a time of profound change in international relations, the Committee saw a greater need for enhanced and improved coordination in the United Nations system, both at headquarters and field levels. The intention of the Secretary-General, as Chairman of ACC, to assign a high priority to coordination and to work with his colleagues on ACC to develop new approaches for collaboration was welcomed.

14. The intention of ACC to review its role and functioning, including the functioning of its subsidiary machinery, was welcomed. The Committee agreed that the review should take into account all relevant guidance of intergovernmental bodies.

15. The Committee also encouraged ACC to rationalize its practices and procedures so that coordination could be carried out with greater effectiveness and efficiency.

16. The Committee reaffirmed the critical role of the ACC itself and emphasized its linkages with the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies in strengthening system-wide coherence and coordination, particularly in the light of General Assembly resolution 45/264.

17. The Committee recognized that further improvements had been made in the format of the ACC annual overview report for 1991 (E/1992/11 and Add.1 and 2). At the same time there was general agreement that further improvement was

urgently needed. The report was considered too descriptive in nature. A more analytical and forward-looking report was necessary in order to facilitate the tasks and responsibilities regarding coordination of the respective organizations which were members of the ACC. The Committee emphasized that the purpose of the report was to serve as an instrument to enable both Member States and ACC to identify and overcome problems in system-wide coordination.

18. The Committee stressed the importance of coordination at the field level and highlighted the role of the United Nations resident coordinator. The Committee looked forward to the outcome of the review of the field presence of the United Nations currently being carried out by the Secretary-General.

19. The Committee requested the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the ACC to continue his efforts to coordinate assistance to countries which have invoked Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations on the grounds that they have suffered serious economic difficulties. The Committee requested the ACC to incorporate in its next annual overview report relevant information on measures undertaken by agencies pursuant to this request.

20. The Committee noted the statement made by the Secretariat that the question of coordination between the United Nations and the Bretton-Woods institutions would be considered at the 1992 session of the Council.

21. The Committee underlined the need to implement General Assembly resolutions 45/190 and 46/150 on coordination of international cooperation to mitigate the consequences of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant taking account also of the relevant decision of the UNDP Governing Council.

22. The Committee noted that the Secretary-General would submit to the Committee at its resumed session a draft system-wide plan of action for African economic recovery and development as called for by the General Assembly taking account also of the Committee's recommendations on the system-wide plan of action on drugs.

23. The Committee stressed that the Secretary-General, in preparing the draft system-wide plan, should be in full conformity with the recommendations of the Committee at its thirtieth and thirty-first sessions, endorsed by the General Assembly, regarding the structure, format and content of the system-wide plan. In this regard, the Committee stressed that the draft system-wide plan should identify problem areas requiring multilateral attention and action. It should include updated analytical and action-oriented proposals with a clear delineation of the responsibilities of each agency, goals to be attained and indications of resources required and available.

Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Administrative Committee on Coordination

24. The Committee took note of the report of the twenty-sixth series of Joint Meetings of the two Committees (E/1991/143).

25. The Committee reaffirmed the potential of the Joint Meetings as a forum for dialogue between Member States and executive heads and recommended that the Joint Meetings be reviewed against that criterion, and that the documentation should be prepared in consultation with the CPC or its Bureau and issued in due time.

26. The Committee was of the view that the topic for the Joint Meetings should be selected ahead of time so that the dialogue could be of interest for all participants while being well focused and leading to specific conclusions.

27. The Committee, bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 45/264, decided to return to the questions of the timing and topic of the twenty-seventh series of the Joint Meetings at its resumed session.

Preparation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 1996-2001

28. The Committee took note of the report on the preparation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 1996-2001 (E/1992/6), and the fact that the plan was still in a preparatory process.

29. The Committee proposed that subprogramme 4.2, "Eradication of violence against women in the family and society", should be placed under programme 1, "Elimination of legal and attitudinal forms of discrimination". The Committee also proposed that dangers to women in armed conflict should be reflected in programme 4, "Promotion of peace and conflict resolution".